



Call for abstracts: Workshop „Gender equality in STEM worldwide – innovative approaches to make STEM inclusive”

The generally lower numbers of women in STEM education and professions have been a concern for a long time, and numerous studies in various disciplines inform policies aimed at increasing them worldwide. However, change is slow. Is it possible that we all overlook essential factors that keep women out of STEM? This is the key question a series of workshops in several countries worldwide aims to address, by bringing together researchers on topics related to gender and STEM, as well as people working in STEM, both in industry and academia.



To discuss this question and search for new approaches is the aim of this workshop in Kyoto on November 27 to 29, which is part of a series of workshops in several countries worldwide. The first workshop will take place in Heidelberg on October 8 and 9. The Kyoto workshop is the second in this series. Two further workshops will be held in Santiago de Chile on March 30 and April 1, 2026, and in Delhi, also in spring 2026.

Some of the topics we intend to discuss during the workshops include the fundamental narratives surrounding women and STEM: Is it clear that women would unambiguously benefit from entering STEM, and thus behave irrationally if they refrain from doing so? Is the focus on women and on how they differ from the “male default” the best way to reach inclusive environments? Can setting a focus on structures rather than on individual choices help to understand what makes STEM less attractive for women than for men? The prevalence of sexism and sexual harassment, social identity issues, workplace and societal norms that negatively affect women in STEM are examples of (structural) aspects that have gained less attention than female characteristics and women’s preferences so far. And what about men? How can men be encouraged to enter non-STEM fields? What structural or individual factors make non-STEM fields less appealing to men than to women? How do men react when women enter STEM fields in larger numbers and their entry is strongly promoted?



Beyond fostering exchange among and between researchers and practitioners, the series of workshops has a second, concrete structural aim: The formation of a network of researchers to collaborate in the development of a large-scale, global panel study including, among other methods, survey experiments to test some of the ideas developed during the workshops in a variety of countries and cultures.

The workshop is organized as a mixture of research presentations and work phases in small groups of researchers and STEM “practitioners” (from academia and the private sector). These work phases serve the aim of developing concrete ideas for the larger panel study. To allow for productive collaboration, a maximum of 25 participants from all relevant fields will be accepted for the workshop.

Two public events will be part of the program: A keynote by Prof. Hiromi M. Yokoyama (Tokyo University) and a panel discussion between researchers and industry representatives.

We invite researchers from all fields who work on topics of relevance for the main theme of the workshop to send an abstract of a maximum of 350 words to WiS-workshop@uni-heidelberg.de before September 26, 2025. Information about acceptance will be sent out by October 16, 2025.

Accommodation in Kyoto can be on the expensive side, so if you are considering joining the workshop please make sure to make a reservation early.

Please see below for a few examples of reasonably priced options or consult the usual booking websites.

AB Hotel Kyoto Shijo Horikawa
<https://www.ab-hotel.jp/kyoto/en/>

Hotel Vista Premio Kyoto
<https://kyoto-kawaramachi.hotel-vista.jp/en/>

Super Hotel Kyoto Shijokawaramachi
<https://www.superhoteljapan.com/en/s-hotels/shijyo/>



Important information:

Dates for all workshops of the series (subject to change):

Workshop	Date	Venue
Inaugural workshop	October 8–9, 2025	Heidelberg – Germany
Second Workshop	November 27–29, 2025	Kyoto – Japan
Follow-up workshops in other regions	March 30–April 1, 2026 Spring 2026	Santiago – Chile New Delhi – India

Target audience: Researchers from all fields who work on topics related to STEM and gender studies.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: September 26, 2025

Date for acceptance of abstracts: October 16, 2025

Workshop dates Kyoto: November 27– 29, 2025

Location: Kyoto University Yoshida International House & Inamori Center

Program (subject to change):

Thursday, November 27:

Location: Kyoto University, [Yoshida International House](#)

18:00 – 18:30 Welcome Session: Short introduction of the workshop, its aims and participants; formation of workgroups; Group Photo

18:30 – 20:00 Welcome reception with participants and keynote-speaker at the Heidelberg University Office Kyoto (HUOK)

Friday, November 28, 2025:

Location: Kyoto University, [Inamori Center](#)

09:00 – 13:00 Research talks (parallel sessions)

13:00 – 13:45 Joint lunch

13:45 – 17:15 Work groups (parallel sessions)



17:30 – 19:00 Public Keynote Lecture:
Prof. Dr. Hiromi M. Yokoyama
**"Gender Equality in STEM Japan:
The Problem of Women-Only Affirmative Action"**

19:15 – 21:00 Informal dinner (restaurant nearby)

Saturday, November 29:

Location: Kyoto University, [Yoshida International House](#)

9:30 – 12:00 Focus groups: Researchers and STEM practitioners (industry
representatives, students, teachers)

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch break

13:00 – 14:30 Public panel discussion Speakers from social sciences, STEM
research and/or the STEM industry

14:30 – 15:00 Coffee/Tee, Networking, Farewell

Optional: Campus Tour and local sightseeing

Organizers:

Prof. Dr. Christiane Schwieren
Chair for Organizational Behavior
Alfred-Weber Institute for Economics
Heidelberg University
and Equal Opportunities Commissioner at Heidelberg University

Sabine Schenk
Head Heidelberg University Office Kyoto (HUOK)

Sara Engeler
PhD Student
Alfred-Weber Institute for Economics
Heidelberg University

In cooperation with:

Kyoto University, Institute for the Future of Human Society